Decline in Violence after the imposition of ban on PWG

1114. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that after the imposition of ban on People's War Group there has been a decline in violent incidents in the previously PWG violence affected States of the country; and

(b) the percentage of decline in the incidents since imposition of the ban?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) Since declaration of PWG as a Terrorist Organisation under the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism (Second) Ordinance, 2001, there has been an increase in the violent incidents perpetrated by the outfit, as compared to the same period last year. However, some of these incidents were as a result of its protest action against inclusion under POTO.

Recognition of Liberation of Ex-French India Movement as Freedom Movement

1115. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government recognize the struggle of liberation of Ex-French India as Freedom Movement;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether Government propose to recognize Liberation of Ex-French India Movement for SSS Pension and initiate action to grant pension?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Merger Movements in the former French possessions in India have been recognized as part of Freedom Movement for the purpose of grant of Samman Pension under Swatantrata Sainik Samman Pension Scheme. However, in the case of

suffering of self-exile, it has been decided to leave them to be covered by State Freedom Fighter's Pension Scheme.

(c) Does not arise.

Afghan citizens in India

1116. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the exact number of Afghan citizens in India;

(b) how many of them enjoy refugee status;

(c) what is the policy of Government of India in regard to their continued stay/return in the changed situation in Afghanistan;

(d) whether some of them have applied for Indian citizenship; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) The number of registered Afghan citizens in India is 18826.

(b) Government of India has not accorded refugees status to Afghan nationals staying in the country; however, there are 11,696 Afghans registered with United Nationals High Commissions For Refugees (UNHCR) as refugees.

(c) Afghan nationals are being permitted to stay in India on humanitarian grounds. However, to maintain some pressure on these persons to return to their home visa extension is granted to them on yearly basis.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The Government of India have granted citizenship to 41 Afghans under section 5 (1) (a) and 132 Afghans under section 6(1), of Citizenship Act, 1955, so far.